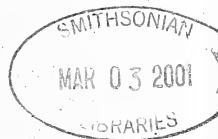




CBC Newsletter



for members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., ornithological society of the Carolinas

Volume 47

February/March 2001

Number 1

Spring in the Carolina Sandhills

The Carolina Bird Club will be returning to Southern Pines for its 2001 spring meeting May 4-6 after an absence of over 20 years. The Sandhills is quite a different place than it was in 1970s. Having developed as a resort area, there is plenty to do even if you are not attracted to the bird watching. We will have lots of material about the area and local events at registration. You will find everything from golf (of course!), equestrian events, antiques, potteries, horticultural gardens, 'pick your own' strawberry patches and more. So bring the whole family!

Springtime will be well under way in the Sandhills by the time our meeting takes place. Resident species such as Eastern Bluebirds, Chipping Sparrows and Northern Cardinals will already be on eggs. The early migrants like Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, White-eyed Vireos and Black-and-white Warblers will be singing from territories and building nests. Breeding season for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, too, will be in full swing, which means that the birds will be very active around their cluster sites. Most of the field trips will be to locations where there is at least one cluster. At Weymouth Woods Nature Preserve, where surely every participant will visit, there are currently five active clusters - so no one should walk away from the weekend without seeing at least one family group!

A variety of activities have been planned for the weekend. Many of the field trips will be to upland Longleaf Pine-Wiregrass habitats

that were typical of the Sandhills region historically but now are critically endangered. Fortunately, restoration of the forests to their original condition is now occurring on some properties in the region. You will see good examples of restored tracts at Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve, Sandhills Gamelands and Reservoir Park in Southern Pines. These are open, park-like areas that are very pleasing to the eye and full of interesting wildlife and vegetation. We invite you to learn about more than just the bird life associated with the Sandhills' unique ecosystem. Take advantage of one or more of the programs offered at Weymouth Woods either before the meeting on Thursday or during the afternoon on Friday or Saturday. We have also left time in late afternoon for folks to explore the area some on their own.

We have two excellent local speakers lined up. Friday evening Scott Hartley, Superintendent of Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve, will present a short talk entitled *Fire In The Pines*. Scott will explain how fire has shaped the Sandhill plant and animal communities. In particular he will discuss the various adaptations of endemic organisms to fire. Scott's slides will highlight many of the Sandhill 'specialties' we expect to encounter during the weekend.

Saturday evening we will have our Annual Meeting followed by a presentation by Pete Campbell who is with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Sandhills Field Station. He

is the Red-cockaded Woodpecker Recovery Coordinator for the Sandhills. Pete will present an update on the status of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker restoration effort in the Sandhills region of North Carolina. He will discuss both the challenges as well as innovative approaches involved in the current conservation strategy for this species.

Our headquarters for the meeting will be at the Holiday Inn in Southern Pines on US Highway 1 (south) at Morganton Road. Rooms are \$65 per night plus 9% tax. **Reservations must be made by calling their toll free number 1-800-262-5737 before April 3.** Reservations after the cut-off will be honored based on availability. There are numerous motels about a mile further south on Hwy. 1 in Southern Pines if you cannot get a room at the Holiday Inn. You might try Best Western (910-944-2367 or toll free 800-528-1234), Days Inn (910-692-7581) or Hampton Inn (910-692-9266).



A New T-Shirt logo to celebrate the spring weekend. Look for them at the evening events.

Southern Pines Field Trip Schedule

THURSDAY, MAY 3

These special trips will take place at Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve. Meet in the Visitors Center.

TRIP 1 Prescribed Burning [2:00 PM]

TRIP 2 Moths Of The Sandhills [8:00 PM]

FRIDAY, MAY 4

Morning Half-Day Trips Trips leave from the hotel parking area

TRIP 3: Raven Rock State Park [7:00 AM]

TRIP 4: Woodlake [7:15 AM]

TRIP 5: Camp Mackall [7:15 AM]

TRIP 6: Sandhills Gamelands And Vicinity [7:20 AM]

TRIP 7: Southern Pines/Pinehurst Area [7:20 AM]

TRIP 8: Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve [7:20 AM] or meet at the reserve parking lot at 7:30 AM]

Afternoon Half-Day Trips

[Trips begin in the Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve parking lot.]

TRIP 9: Butterflies [1:00 PM]

TRIP 10: Wildflowers [1:15 PM]

TRIP 11: Hummingbirds [1:30 PM]

TRIP 12: Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Nesting Ecology [1:30 PM]

All-Day Trips

[Trips leave from the hotel parking area.]

TRIP 13: Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge And Vicinity [7:00 AM]

TRIP 14: Laurinburg And Points South [7:00 AM]

SATURDAY, MAY 5

Morning Half-Day Trips [Trips leave from the hotel parking area.]

TRIP 15 Raven Rock State Park [7:00 AM]

TRIP 16 Jordan Lake State Park [7:00 AM]

TRIP 17 Woodlake [7:15 AM]

TRIP 18 Camp Mackall [7:15 AM]

TRIP 19 Sandhills Gamelands And Vicinity [7:20 AM]

TRIP 20 Southern Pines/Pinehurst Area [7:20 AM]

TRIP 21 Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve [7:20 AM] [Or meet at the reserve parking lot at 7:30 AM]

Afternoon Half-Day Trips

[Trips begin in the parking lot of Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve.]

TRIP 22 Butterflies [1:00 PM]

TRIP 23 Wildflowers [1:15 PM]

TRIP 24 Hummingbirds [1:30 PM]

TRIP 25 Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Nesting Ecology [1:30 PM]

All-Day Trips

[Trips leave from the hotel parking area.]

TRIP 13: Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge And Vicinity [7:00 AM]

TRIP 14: Laurinburg And Points South [7:00 AM]

SUNDAY, MAY 6

Several half-day trips will be scheduled to area hotspots the evening before. Locations will be dependent on bird activity Friday and Saturday.

SPRING CBC MEETING, MAY 3-6, 2001

MEETING & FIELD TRIP REGISTRATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ [day]; _____ [evening]

Email: _____

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ for _____ member registrtrtion[s] at \$10 each and/or _____ non-member registration[s] at \$20 each. Please include any additional names not listed above: _____

Indicate which field trip(s) you wish to participate in by writing the number and the names of those participating next to the day and time.

Trip #	Names of Participants
Thursday	_____
Friday, All Day	_____
Friday, Morning	_____
Friday, Afternoon	_____
Saturday, All Day	_____
Saturday, Morning	_____
Saturday, Afternoon	_____

Mail to Carolina Bird Club, 11 West Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27601-1029 by April 20, 2001.

Southern Pines Field Trip Descriptions

TRIP 1: Prescribed Burning.

We will have the unique opportunity to join park staff at Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve for an up close look at how a prescribed burn is prepared for and conducted. Participants will measure weather parameters and if conditions are favorable, staff will burn a small area. The program is scheduled from 2:00-4:00 PM.

TRIP 2: Moths of the Sandhills.

We will join a park ranger to learn about the ecology of Sandhills moths and do some moth trapping. Various techniques will be employed to attract and trap a variety of species for observation and identification. We also will keep an ear out for owls and nightjars. Wear long pants and long sleeves and be sure to bring insect repellent and a flashlight. The program is scheduled from 8:00-9:00 PM.

TRIPS 3 & 16: Raven Rock State Park.

We will stroll the scenic bluffs along the Cape Fear River surrounded by hardwoods where neotropical migrants are often plentiful. Woodland birding in the park often turns up mixed flocks with unexpected species in the spring (such as Wilson's Warbler last year). Be sure to wear comfortable shoes since we may encounter some relief along the trails. However the walking will not be too strenuous. Participants should be back at the hotel by 12:30 PM.

TRIPS 4 & 17: Woodlake.

We will enjoy a diversity of stops within the private residential golf community of Woodlake, which surrounds Lake Surf - the largest body of water in Moore County. Not only will we look for lingering waterfowl but also we will visit both upland hardwood and pine stands for migrants. Also the group will check the marsh behind the dam for Bald Eagle and breeding species such as Green Heron, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Vireo and Prothonotary Warbler. We will also watch for large mammals such as Coyote, Grey Fox, Bobcat, River Otter, Beaver and Muskrat that frequent the area. The group should be back at the hotel by Noon.

TRIPS 5 & 18: Camp-Mackall

We will join Ft. Bragg biologist Alan Schultz for a guided tour of Camp Mackall. The installation is a satellite training area of Ft. Bragg with extensive pine savannahs as well as bottomland hardwood along Drowning Creek. It is here where the Army's elite Special Forces trains that Lark Sparrows have been found breeding. There are open areas of Longleaf Pine and Wiregrass where we may find Northern Bobwhite, Loggerhead Shrike, Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Brown-headed Nuthatch. The bottomland habitat could produce Wood Duck, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Parula and perhaps Swainson's Warbler. The trip will end at Noon.

TRIPS 6 & 19: Sandhills Gamelands and Vicinity

This trip will visit some of the birding hotspots within and immediately adjacent to Sandhills Gamelands. We should see most of the species commonly found in xeric upland Longleaf Pine communities. We will be a stop along Thunder Road at what most consider the most beautiful stand of Longleaf in the area. In addition to searching for Bachman's Sparrows and Red-cockaded woodpeckers, a Wildlife Commission biologist will discuss how they are gradually restoring Gamelands' forests to their original state. The group will then visit the McKinney Lake Fish Hatchery where we may find lingering shorebirds or waterbirds. If time permits, a stop may also be made along Drowning Creek to search for flocks of migrants too. The trip should be over by Noon.

TRIPS 7 & 20: Southern Pines/Pinehurst Area

We will begin with a walk along the boundary of the historic Moore County Airport to look for Grasshopper Sparrows, Horned Larks and other grassland species. We will then explore trails at Southern Pines Reservoir Park and Sandhills Community College for migrants and early breeders among the expanse of Longleaf Pines, flowering trees and wetland vegetation. Be sure to wear appropriate footwear and long pants since we will be walking through extensive grassy and damp areas. The trip will end at Noon.



Continued on next page.

Field Trips Continued.

TRIPS 8 & 21: Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve

We will walk about a mile of the loop trails through typical Sandhill drains looking for flocks of migrant flycatchers, thrushes and warblers. We will listen for an early Solitary Vireos and Bachman's Sparrows which breed at the preserve. There will also be the opportunity to learn about the breeding groups of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers at the park this season. We will also watch for family groups of foraging Fox Squirrels that are more active at this time of year. In addition, we will have a chance to visit the newly established migration monitoring bird banding station and perhaps see both local and migrant species up close. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a camera - there could be some good photo opportunities. The program will be over at Noon.

TRIPS 9 & 22: Butterflies of the Sandhills

We will sharpen our skills at identifying Duskywings and Cloudywings that are plentiful along the trails at Weymouth Woods. Hoary-edged Skippers may also be fairly common at this time of year. In addition, we may encounter Pearly Eyes as well as an American Cooper. The program will last about two hours.

TRIPS 10 & 23: Spring Wildflower Walk.

The winding trails of Weymouth Woods will take us through several types of upland Sandhills habitats in search of local spring specialties such as blooming pitcher plants, Sun Dews, Wild Indigo, Goats Rue, Rosy Spiderwort, Sandhill Sandwort, Tread Softly and Queen's Root. The terrain will be good but be prepared to get close to dense vegetation - long pants and long sleeves are encouraged. The walk will be approximately two hours long.

TRIPS 11 & 24: Hummingbirds.

This is your chance to ask questions about hummingbird ecology and feeding in North Carolina. We will also observe Ruby-throated Hummingbirds up close as they are banded as part of ongoing research at the Visitor's Center. Don't forget your camera and plenty of film! The program will end around 3:30 PM or when the hummers thin out at the feeders.

TRIPS 12 & 25: Red-cockaded Woodpecker Nesting Ecology.

We will join a local woodpecker biologist to learn about the unique ecology of this native endangered species. We will hear about the history of woodpecker conservation efforts in the Sandhills. Also field techniques used for monitoring of Red-cockaded woodpeckers during the breeding will be demonstrated. The program will last about two hours.

TRIPS 13 & 26: Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge and Vicinity.

We will visit a few different parts of the refuge property including Wildlife Drive as well as walk in to Arrowhead Lake and Ross's Pond. There should be a diversity of forest, wetland, bottomland and grassland species. We should find Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Wood Thrush, Summer Tanager, numerous warbler species including Kentucky Warbler, and sparrows including Song and Field Sparrow. It is possible we may even see Wild Turkeys since they are now plentiful on and around the refuge. We will also stop at Blewett Falls along the Pee Dee River to do some woodland birding and hunt for migrant flocks. Wear long pants and do not forget to bring insect repellent since the insects at the refuge can be noticeable even in early spring. In addition, be sure to bring a lunch and plenty to drink since few accommodations are available along the way. The group should be back at the hotel by 5:00 PM.

TRIPS 14 & 27: Laurinburg and Points South.

Our first stop will be in historic downtown Laurinburg where a pair of Mississippi Kites has nested for the past several summers. The group will also visit Lake Paul Wallace in Bennettsville (South Carolina) that has been a birding hotspot for many years but rather neglected by birders until two years ago when a Western Grebe was discovered there. The lake may be holding a few lingering ducks and waterbirds but its wooded edges should produce good mixed flocks of migrants. We will also stop at several wet areas and fields along the way including at least one heron/egret/cormorant rookery. There will be an opportunity to stop for a quick lunch along the way. Trip should be back in Southern Pines by about 5:00 PM.

COLORADO SPRING GROUSE TRIP

April 17-22, 2001

LEADER: Derb Carter

PARTICIPANTS: 9 (one van) + leader

Spring in Colorado provides an opportunity to observe several grouse species on display leks. Early in the morning, male grouse gather at traditional sites to strut and vocalize in hopes of attracting females. These display arenas provide the best opportunity to view normally elusive grouse and to ponder this unusual mating ritual. We will visit display leks of Greater Sage-Grouse, Gunnison Sage-Grouse (recently recognized as a full species), Greater Prairie Chicken, Lesser Prairie Chicken, and Sharp-tailed Grouse. In addition, we will attempt to see Blue Grouse and White-tailed Ptarmigan, which are not lek species. Other Colorado specialties that we will make an effort to locate include Ferruginous Hawk, Chestnut-collared and McCown's Longspurs, Lark Bunting, and Mountain Plover on the Pawnee Grasslands, Virginia's Warbler in the foothills, and if it is a late Spring in the Rockies, all three species of Rosy-finches.

The grouse species occupy different grasslands habitats in different geographic areas and the trip involves considerable driving to visit all the sites. The objective is to be positioned at a viewing site for a particular species before dawn. This requires arriving in the area for lodging the evening before and early-morning departures. We thus will do significant daytime driving, but will make periodic stops to bird along the way.

COST:

\$400 per person for CBC members; \$425 for non-members. Includes all lodging based on double occupancy and ground transportation. Does not include meals except ranch breakfast in Wray. Current airfare from Charlotte to Denver is \$350. Good connections are also available at Greenville-Spartanburg airport.

RESERVATIONS:

\$100 deposit (make check to Carolina Bird Club) due with reservation. Send to CBC, 11 W. Jones St., Raleigh, NC, 27601-0129, with your name, address, telephone number and email address. Reservations will be accepted in order of receipt. Mailings should be post-marked **NO EARLIER** than Feb. 1, 2001. In the event of oversubscription, selection among reservations with identical post-marks will be made by lot, and preference will be given to CBC members. Final payment is due March 10, 2001. Cancellations will receive full refunds if an acceptable replacement is found. Otherwise, deposits will be forfeited.

INFORMATION:

Derb Carter
919-833-4859
derbc@selc.nc.org



ITINERARY

Tuesday, April 17

Trip begins in Denver at 11 am. Participants can arrive the previous evening or take an early Tuesday flight. Drive to Georgetown to check feeders for rosy-finches. Visit Greater Sage-Grouse lek before dusk. Night in Craig.

Wednesday, April 18

Morning at Sharp-tailed Grouse lek, then to Greater Sage-Grouse lek if needed. Drive to Gunnison. Night in Gunnison.

Thursday, April 19

Morning at Gunnison Sage-Grouse lek. Drive to Springfield with pinyon-juniper birding en route. Night in Springfield.

Friday, April 20

Morning at Lesser Prairie-Chicken lek. Drive to Wray. Night in Wray.

Saturday, April 21

Morning at Greater Prairie-Chicken lek. Drive to Pawnee Grasslands for afternoon birding. Night in Greeley.

Sunday, April 22

Either bird Pawnee Grasslands or look for White-tailed Ptarmigan at Guanella Pass, depending on weather and snow conditions. Trip concludes at 2 pm at Denver airport.

Winter Hummingbird Banding in the Carolinas

by Susan Campbell

This has been a very busy year documenting, visiting and banding wintering hummingbirds in the area—and it is not over yet! Close to 100 hummingbirds have been reported wintering around feeders and flowers across North and South Carolina. Since early November I have caught 10 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, 15 Rufous Hummingbirds, 4 Black-chinned Hummingbirds and a Green Breasted Mango!!

The mango was an immature that appeared at the home of Lori Turner in Concord, NC about November 8th. I heard about it a week later and managed to catch and band it, confirming its identity on November 19th. It stayed around feeders in the yard where it was visited by well over 500 folks from all over the US until its disappearance on December 8th. Look for further details on this amazing little bird, which will be a first state record for NC (and the first ever reported outside of south Texas), in an upcoming issue of *The Chat*.

The Black-chinned hummers have been juveniles – two females and, at long last, two males with a few black and purple feathers appearing in their gorgets. One female was in Charlotte, the other in Goldsboro and the two males are at coastal feeders: one in Wilmington and one in Sunset Lakes.



Photograph by Randy Emmitt ©2001

Selasphorus hummingbirds (probably mostly Rufous) have been at feeders from the mountains to the sea. It has actually been a record year for reports of this genus all over the southeast. The abnormally cold weather has no doubt prompted more folks to report birds at their feeders. All of the *Selasphorus* that I have banded have been Rufous so far but neither Allen's nor Broad-tailed can be ruled out until the birds are scrutinized closely in the hand. Most of the individuals have been immature (7 females and 4 males) but I have found two adult females and one adult male at feeders. Also I recaptured an adult female Rufous in Shelby that I banded last year as a juvenile. Probably the most interesting report with regards to Rufous in North Carolina was the resighting of a banded hummer in the mountains in December. It was a female hummingbird originally banded and color marked in Asheville by Bob Sargent just after Thanksgiving. However it was found and identified by the bright yellow mark on its forehead at a different feeder a month later 20 miles to the north!

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have been documented only along the coast this winter. I have banded seven in the Buxton area and one in Sunset Lakes. Another real highlight of the season was a second year recapture of a male Ruby-throated in Buxton. The hummingbird had been banded originally by the Sargents as a juvenile in the fall of 1998 and has

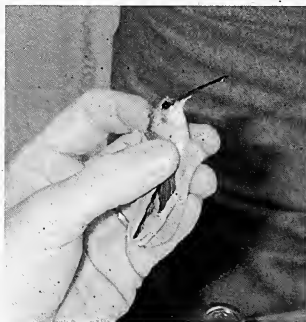
now spent the past three winters in the same yard. In addition, many suspected Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have been reported in the Morehead City area and I hope to check in on a number these birds over the winter CBC meeting weekend to find out for sure.

I have lots more work planned over the next month while the wintering hummers are still around. At least two trips to South Carolina are in the planning stages as well as a trip back to the Outer Banks and a return trip to the Wilmington area. I hope to also have time to make a trip to the mountains to look in on a few hummers at feeders in the Asheville area as well. It is certainly an exciting time!

Many thanks to all of the folks who have helped notify me of wintering hummers in the Carolinas. Without them and the cooperation of the hummer hosts, this work would not be possible. I am also indebted to the North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences, the Hummer/Bird Study Group and the private donors who have been so generous in their funding of my research this winter. It has been a tremendously successful season for hummingbird research here, largely due to the support and assistance of the birding community in the Carolinas. I am extremely grateful to you all.



Photograph by Randy Emmitt ©2001



Photograph by Celia & Eric Dean ©2000



Photography by Randy Emmitt ©2000

Requiem for a Flycatcher

Joseph Covington, Raleigh

A flycatcher from Texas—or even beyond
Showed up here in Goldsboro quite far from his pond.
The young bird was all red from his head to his vent.
For us listers, the beast was a sight Heaven sent.
Hardly had the glad news hit the 'Net, don't you know,
Fore we flew down the route this is named 7-0.
Raleigh, Durham, and Cary sent more than a crowd.
Charlotte and Chapel Hill—every one was allowed
To observe the small bird as he swooped and returned
—Save those few of us who drove so far and got burned.
'Cause he may or he might sit that fence when you came,
Or he could—yes, he would—cross the Neuse just the same.
He found bugs—oh so fine—as they crawled in the grass.
Took them right from our Phoebe's and mocked them with sass.
Then there came a cold day in December, alas,
When E. Dean posted that we should move our sweet —
If we want to tick off such a bird in its class.
The snow was on its way from the North to the South,
And then soon our lost bird would have zilch in his mouth.
Some fast folks ran on down and found "Red" with much zeal,
And when topping it off with a duck, found a teal!
But to our sad dismay the bird has not been seen
Since the grass of Wayne County turned white from its green.
We may hope he'll come back, though it doesn't look good
To all those who sleighed in and forlornly just stood.
Now this tale of lost birds has a moral, you know:
Ducks are fine, but flycatchers should not fly to snow.

Out and About

Carolina birders have been treated to an assortment of rarities this winter. A Green-breasted Mango in Concord, NC drew over 500 birders from across the US and Canada. Below are a few of them waiting in Laurie Turner's yard.



Photograph by Celia & Eric Dean ©2000

Goldsboro was truly blessed with a Black-chinned Hummingbird [opposite page], Fulvous Whistling Duck, Cinnamon Teal [above] and Vermilion Flycatcher [top]. Black-chinned Hummingbirds also showed up in Charlotte and Sunset Beach, NC. Another Cinnamon Teal settled in Sunset Beach.

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The CBC Newsletter is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc., the ornithological society of the Carolinas. CBC is a nonprofit corporation headquartered in Raleigh, NC. Founded in 1937 the membership open to anyone interested in birds, natural history and conservation. Members are encouraged to submit items of interest to the CBC Newsletter editor:

Judy Walker,

7639 Farm Gate Dr., Charlotte, NC 28215
jwalker@email.uncc.edu

Submission deadlines are the 10th of January, March, May, July, September and November.

**Submit membership applications
and change of address to:
CBC Headquarters Secretary**

**11 W. Jones St.,
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WHAT'S INSIDE

Spring Meeting	1
Spring Meeting Registration	2
Spring Meeting Field Trips	2-4
Colorado Grouse Trip	5
Winter Hummers	6
Requim for a Flycatcher	7
Out and About	7